

To Study a Spartan

by Mywayoflife

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Summary: Sangheili Capture Spartan... Sangheili try to study Spartan... Spartan doesn't like it... It's better for you to read it lol. SpartanXSangheili Rated M for Romance, blood, violence, language, etc.

1. Prologue

Do not stand at my grave and weep, _I am not there... I do not sleep._

I am the thousand winds that blow... _I am the diamond glints on snow..._

I am the sunlight on ripened grain... _I am the gentle autumn rain._

When you wake in the morning's hush, _I am the swift uplifting rush_

Of gentle birds in circling flight... _I am the soft star that shines at night._

Do not stand at my grave and cryâ€”

I am not there... I did not die...

"_Hehâ€¦ I suppose that old Irish rhyme has more meaning to me than anyone else in the universe_â€¦" The Spartan thought as it stared up into the skies of Planet Reach.

It was September 2nd, 2552; approximately 20:00 Hours. It looked around from the tower as Covenant drop ships approached. The planet was in ruin and all who had stood by it, fighting to stay alive were now dead and gone. The black and red armored Spartan gripped the DMR in its left hand; was a lone wolf now. Across the armor on its shoulders was its name, "Epitaph" written in red. Epitaph, Spartan

118, demonâ€¦it went by all of these names and many more.

It sighed and held up its DMR as the Phantoms unloaded their soldiers. They were coming for it. The Spartan knew it wasn't going to win this fight, but it wasn't going down without taking a few thousand Covenant bastards with it.

****Meanwhile, on the Sangheili Super Carrier Righteous Passageâ€¦****

"Able 'Idheo, may I have a word with you?" The Ship Master asked as he stepped into a room.

Standing on the opposite side, staring out the window was a Sangheili in unique Ultra Armor. The armor was black with red symbols and the eyes, which were white for most other Ultra armored Sangheili, glowed like rubies. Over the right eye was a long scratch. He turned his head slowly and looked at the Ship Master.

"I need you to rid us of a rather irritating demon."

"Why not send your men to do the deed?" The black Ultra asked.

"I have sent many of our brothers down to handle it, butâ€¦ this demon has killed every last one who has challenged it."

Able turned his around and looked at him. "One single demon has done that much damage?"

"Yes my brother. I need you and your squad to go down there and get rid of it."

"How much are you paying us?"

The Ship Master growled a little then sighed. "You will be paid 500,000 if you accomplish the mission."

"500,000? You must really want this demon dead."

The Ship Master activated a screen and played a video. "This came in from a Field Marshall I sent down to the surface to eliminate the demon."

Able turned and watched as a picture appeared on the screen. The area looked like an abandoned construction site. There was loud gunfire and he could hear dying screams coming from some Sangheili. The Field Marshall charged up the hill to where the screams were coming from. Able could see an old five story building. There must have been at least fifty Sangheili at the entrance, firing in as something fired back at them. Able could see many dead Sangheili lying around the area.

The Field Marshall pulled out his energy sword and ran around to the opposite side of the building. There was an opening there and nobody was around it. The Marshall charged in; expecting to catch the demon off guard.

Suddenly the Marshall was stabbed through the chest by another energy sword and he fell to the ground on his back. Able knew he was dead. The n he saw a Spartan in black and red armor walk out of the shadows

and stare down at him. Its glowing red visor hid its eyes and made the black Ultra curious. He had never seen a Spartan that looked like that before. He watched as it then ran over to where a hole in the wall was and began firing at those who were attempting to enter while it was distracted.

"You see Able?" he Ship Master said as he turned off the video. "This demon is a great problem and must be eliminated.

"Very well Ship Master. I will kill this demon for you." Able said as he walked out of the room.

"_Interesting_ very interesting_" _Able thought deeply as he walked to the hanger to meet up with his squad. _"That Spartan it's somehow different from the others I have seen..." _

While most Sangheili viewed humans and Spartans as plagues, Able and his squad didn't. They actually found them rather intriguing creatures. They had many different lifestyles, cultures, religions, and even languages among their species that Able's squad couldn't help but be fascinated by them. Able and his squad were known as freelancers, the human equivalent of a mercenary. They did jobs that the Covenant paid them for. They only worked for the Covenant but when not on the job they spied on humans; learning all they could about them.

The door to the hanger opened and standing there was a Sangheili in black Ranger armor. "Seeing you here, I assume we have a new job." The Ranger said.

"You assume correctly Ehru. Gather the others; I'll brief everyone on the way down to the surface."

2. We meet

****September 10th, 2552****

****Reach's Atmosphere****

****0900 hours****

"So let me get this straight, we're being paid 500,000 to kill one Spartan?" a Sangheili in grey Zealot armor asked. Able nodded in response. "I have great difficulty believing that, Able." Able sighed and looked at his squad. There were five members altogether, including himself.

The newest member of the squad was a youngling by the name of Kaine 'Eto. He wore black Minor armor. He didn't have much experience in the war, but he was the best Sniper Able had ever seen. This was going to be his first mission with them and the first time he'd see a Spartan. He remembered Kaine telling him that what he wanted to do most while on the team was come face-to-face with a real Spartan. The kid was a little naive but that was to be expected.

The Sangheili in the Zealot armor was Orro 'Sylod. He had been on the squad for roughly a year now and was the pilot and big weapons guy of the team. He even knew how to pilot human vehicles which had come in very handy on a lot of occasions. Orro liked human music, but he

liked it in only two languages; Japanese and Russian. Orro had even learned how to speak the two human languages and taught them to the other members of the squad. It made them able to speak to each other without any other Sangheili understanding them.

Up from him was Drak 'Sikev. He specialized in technology and could hack into anything he wanted. He wore black Ranger armor and had been in the squad for roughly seven years. Drak was the smart one of the group and he liked human literature. Whenever he was in his quarters he would read books that he had picked up on his various journeys with Able and the others. He was also familiar with the human body since he also read science books, making him a deadly opponent when a human went up against him.

Ehru was the second in command and Orro's older birth brother. He had been on the squad since the beginning and was Able's closest friend. He wore black Spec-Ops armor. Ehru was fascinated by human culture and how they could differ from other human planets and even from city-to-city. He was also fascinated by how different humans could look from each other. Whenever he wasn't on the job he was taking notes in a journal he kept with him. He even drew faces of humans he saw but he never drew the faces of those he killed in battle.

"I must agree with Orro; This Shipmaster has lied to us before." Drak added as he crossed his arms.

"I am aware of that but I'm not too worried about our pay."

"Why is that, Sir?" Kaine asked.

"Because I want to see this Spartan in person. It's been holding off the Shipmaster's forces for a week now on its own. And from the video I saw of it the Spartan is a strange one."

"Well, I don't really care much for payment either way." Ehru said.

"We're at our destination, Sir." The pilot told them as the Phantom began to slow down and the doors began to open.

Able picked up his two energy swords and placed them on each of his thigh plates. He then picked up a Carbine and walked to the door. When it was fully open he and his Squad jumped out and landed on the ground a few feet below.

Gunfire rang out and Able saw a few Grunts running away screaming. He looked in the opposite direction to where they were running to and saw the Spartan kill a Sangheili in regular Ultra armor with an energy sword. It then turned and stared at them before coming under fire from a group of Sangheili Rangers as they jumped out of their drop pods and ran off back into the building.

"After it!" A Field Marshal yelled.

"Stop!" Able suddenly commanded. All looked at him. "If you go charging in there you'll only get gunned down."

"And who are you to give me a command, Ultra?" The Field Marshall growled.

"I am Able 'Idheo and my squad and I were sent here to deal with the demon."

The other Sangheili looked at him in shock. They all knew who he was and were shocked to see him here. Able may have worn mere Ultra armor but he was ranked as a Fleet Master among them.

"â€|I see." The Field Marshall said.

Suddenly they heard a bang and a squawk. A group of Jackals that were placed on the tower where the Spartan had once stood were now being sniped. Within a few moments they were all dead. The Field Marshall snarled.

"Wretched demon has been managing to hold us off for a week. I've lost many soldiers and those who are not dead are exhausted from battle." He sighed and looked at the Sangheili standing behind him.

"I want you to withdraw your men from the battle field. We will take care of the Demon." Able said as he placed his hand on the Field Marshall's shoulder.

"As you wish, 'Idheo. Soldiers, fall back! We have done our job." He commanded. His men began to fall back when they suddenly spotted the Spartan on the edge of the roof staring down at them.

"Don't even think about it." Able told the group. "It has already proven to be a match for all of you in your current state. Now get back to the Passage."

**With Epitaph**

Epitaph watched as the Covenant forces suddenly began to leave. _"How strangeâ€| First that Elite in black Ultra armor shows up then everyone decides to leaveâ€| I wonder what they're planning."_

It sighed deeply and looked up at the sky. Suddenly the scenery changed. It could see the Sangheili in black Ultra armor standing in front of it. They were both in the Spartan's building, but they were not fighting. It heard the Sangheili speak.

"â€|I am Able 'Idheo and I have been sent here to kill you."

"If you were sent here to kill me then why are you unarmed? Pretty stupid to try and kill when you have no weapons." The Spartan growled, aiming a shotgun at him.

"Because I don't want to fight youâ€|at least not tonight, I just wanted to warn you. Come tomorrow I will be here with an Energy Sword. We will duel then."

Then, just like that the vision was gone and the Spartan was staring up into the sky once more. It sighed and shook its head. _"Another visionâ€| I suppose he will visit me tonightâ€| I should get readyâ€|"_

**With Able**

That very night, Able snuck up to the building alone. His squad

stayed behind and set up a perimeter around the area so that the Spartan couldn't escape. Able turned on his COMM. "Kaine, do you see the Spartan."

The Minor was standing on top of a pipe aiming his Carbine at the building. "I think its inside, Sir. I haven't seen it within the past ten minutes."

"Alright everyone keep vigilant. This is most likely one of our most dangerous missions we've ever had."

"Understood."

Able entered the building and began his search for the Spartan. He searched through the first two floors without much luck. Suddenly, he heard a gunshot. It sounded like a human Sniper Rifle.

"Augh! DAMN IT!" Kaine yelled in frustration through the COMMS.

"Kaine, are you alright? What happened?" Able asked.

"Damn that Spartan has good aim. It must of seen me aiming at the building cuz it shot a hole straight through my Carbine; the thing's useless now, Sir." He replied

"Waitâ€¦it didn't just shoot you?"

"Uhh, no Sir; I'm not injured other than the fact that I nearly had a heart attack from my gun rupturing."

"What should we do, Able?" Ehru asked over the COMMS.

"I want all of you to fall back. Somehow the Spartan knows we're here so it's better if I do this alone." Able replied as he began to walk up another flight of stairs.

"Will you be alright on your own, Able? This Spartan is a tough one. You may be in over your head." Orro chuckled.

Able merely chuckled as well and said, "If I am in over my head then the rest of you are definitely outmatched. I'll be just fine. I've made it through two floors without being killed so this Spartan must know something's up."

"Understood; radio us if you need any help." Ehru said to him. Able could hear the worry in his voice and smiled a little.

"Understood." He replied before turning off his COMM.

Suddenly, the moment he turned off his COMM he heard a click and froze.

"Don't try anything, Elite. I'm not exactly in a very good mood to be dealing with you." He heard from behind him.

Able calmly held up his hands and didn't move. "Calm yourself Spartan. I have no weapons to fight you with. I have come unarmed." He told it.

"I know that." It replied.

Able heard the Spartan begin walking around to his front and turned his head slowly to watch it. The Spartan looked just as strong as it did when he saw it on the video screen. Now that it was dark though, it looked even more ominous and intimidating with its glowing red visor and the moonlight silhouetting it. He could see the barrel of a shotgun shining in the moonlight.

"What do you want?"

He slowly reached up and the Spartan pointed the gun in his face. "Please, I only wish to turn on my night vision."

"And why should I let you? I'm a lot safer with it off."

"It's rude to talk to someone when you can't see them and it is like I said before; I did not come tonight to harm you." He told it.

The Spartan grumbled but lowered the shotgun, allowing him to turn on his night vision. When he did everything around him became visible including the Spartan. He looked it over as it stood there. It was well built and looked powerful—of course he expected it to be that way since it had been all alone holding off the Covenant for so long.

"May I ask your name?"

The Spartan merely turned to the side; showing him its shoulder plating. He looked at it and saw written in red the word—

"Epitaph, huh; an ominous name for an ominous Spartan." He said before looking up at its visor. "It suits you perfectly."

"It's not my actual name, idiot. It's the name I was given when I became a Spartan and what the UNSC and ONI both call me."

"I would like to know your real name."

"Why the hell would I tell you?"

"I like to know the names of the warriors I fight or in this case I will be fighting—I am Able 'Idheo and I have been sent here to kill you."

"If you were sent here to kill me then why are you unarmed? Pretty stupid to try and kill when you have no weapons."

"Because I don't want to fight you—at least not tonight, I just wanted to warn you. Come tomorrow I will be here with an Energy Sword. We will duel then."

"Good, I look forward to wearing your mandibles as around my neck as a souvenir." Epitaph spat.

Able couldn't help chuckling. "You are not afraid, that's good."

"I didn't say I wasn't afraid. Anyone who says that they aren't afraid when they're about to go into battle is a fucking liar and I

am NOT a liar."

Able smirked behind his helmet and nodded. "Very wise; I look forward to our duel. You can rest for the night, Spartan. All of the Covenant have left the area. My squad and I are the only ones here and we are not going to attack. Rest and be prepared for tomorrow."

"So what; even if they did leave they'll be back after I kill you and your buddies."

"Trust me, they will not." He told it before turning around.
"Goodnight Spartan; I will see you in the morning outside this building." Able then walked away.

**With Epitaph**

"_What the hell is this guy up to? Does he really believe he can defeat me on his own?...Orâ€¦.or is he really THAT good at fighting? Damn it that stupid vision didn't help me whatsoever!" _Epitaph thought as it watched Able begin descending down the stairs.

"â€¦_I sense that I can trust his saying that I can rest for tonightâ€¦butâ€¦I don't know about the rest of the things he said...Well either way I have some down time. I better catch some Zs while I canâ€¦|"_

**With Able**

_ "What anâ€¦interesting Spartan; surely a great and well experienced fighter. He is worthy of the warrior name." _Able thought before pausing and looking up to see the Spartan walk back into the third floor.

"_Butâ€¦there's something strange about him. He is no fool so he had to of known I was inside before he even fired at Kaineâ€¦but Kaine said that the Spartan wasn't even facing my direction when I entered the building, so why didn't he just kill me right then and there?"_

The Ultra Sangheili then shook his head and chuckled as he continued to make his way out of the building.

"â€¦_You are a very unique Spartan, Epitaphâ€¦|"_

3. The Duel

"Spartan, are you going to sleep through our duel? Don't make me come up there!"

Epitaph growled as it slowly awoke from a rather peaceful slumber. The sun was just barely coming up over the horizon and the Elite it met last night was already wide awake and expecting a duel. It slowly stood up and splashed cold water on its face to wake itself up. There were a lot of supplies left behind by those who managed to flee Reach. If Epitaph managed to survive and win the duel it could probably last over a year here without having to go hunting for more supplies.

"Spartan!" It heard the Elite holler from outside.

"Good God shut the hell up!" _Epitaph thought as it dried its face off with a towel before slipping back on its helmet. It soon walked down to the ground floor and exited the building. Standing there waiting for it was the Ultra Elite and his squad. He had his arms crossed and looked annoyed.

"I thought I was going to have to come up there and wake you up myself." He said as he uncrossed his arms.

"Hey cut me some slack, it's been roughly a month since I've gotten some descent sleep."

Able chuckled and nodded. "I suppose you have a point there. Are you ready for our duel then?"

Epitaph glanced around at the other elites standing in front of it. As it looked at each Elite it couldn't sense any hatred or disgust towards it. They seemed more fascinated and curious.

"Strange how none of you look at me with them same angry look that others of your species do."

"Unlike those who are in the Covenant, we bare no hatred toward your kind, Spartan." Drak replied.

Able pulled out two Energy Swords and tossed one to Epitaph before activating his own. "Prepare yourself Spartan."

Epitaph sighed and activated the sword that was tossed to it. Able's squad backed off as the two began to circle each other. "No matter what," The Ultra started as he glanced at his men. "Do not interfere. If the Spartan does kill me then Ehru will take over and you all will leave this Spartan be."

They all nodded and watched as the two continued their circle. Suddenly Epitaph lunged at Able, moving so quickly that the Sangheili just barely managed to block the attack and push the Spartan back. Epitaph then blocked a slash from his blade then came in high. Able's superior height and skill allowed him to block the attack. Epitaph tried to hit him in the side, but again his sword kept him from harm.

"Heh, you are quite a swordsman." Able smirked as he backed up a little.

"You're not so bad yourself Elite." Epitaph replied before charging at him again.

He blocked Epitaph with his swords. After that, he used one of his blades to knock the sword out of its hand. Then he kicked it down and pinned it there with its foot. Epitaph gasped and coughed from being stepped on so hard.

"Damn it." The Spartan growled.

Able chuckled and stared down at it. "Excellent, you are a strong warrior. With proper training you would be even better."

"Well, do it already!" Epitaph growled.

"Nonsense Spartan, we have all day and you are good entertainment." The Ultra replied before he removed his foot from its chest.

The Spartan stood up and stared at him.

"Now, pick up your sword and let us continue."

Epitaph stared at the disengaged sword before picking it up and reactivating it. Able raised his sword and then brought it down. Epitaph jumped back to dodge his attack. It charged forward, guiding its sword from the right to the left. Able's sword met its own, creating bright, white sparks. Using his sword, he knocked Epitaph back. It spun around. Darting forward, it raised its sword diagonally and brought it down. Able just barely dodged the attack; the edge of Epitaph's sword scratching the armor on his left shoulder.

The duel continued all day. Able seemed to continuously win against Epitaph who was becoming more and more furious and confused by the hour. Able had multiple chances to kill it but on each match when he pinned it he only told Epitaph what it was doing wrong and how to change tactics.

Soon the sun began to set and Ehru sighed. "It is getting late, Able. I think it's time to end this."

The Ultra looked at his friend then back at the Spartan. "I am sorry Epitaph, but I must eliminate you now. It has been an honor dueling you." He lunged at the Spartan who blocked both of his swords before jumping back. Epitaph knew it was in trouble. It was exhausted and was already injured.

Epitaph came at him again. For a while, their swords flashed. When their swords met in the air, he used his to push Epitaph's sword down. While the Spartan was down, he raised his sword. As he brought it down, it swiftly rolled out of the way. The two stared at each other for a moment, sizing each other up.

Finally, he veered behind Epitaph and caught it off guard. He took its sword-wielding arm and bent it behind its back before kicking it away hard. Epitaph rolled as it smacked against the ground before smashing into a large boulder. The Spartan's helmet flew off and laid on the ground beside it.

The Ultra approached with his sword activated. The Spartan didn't move. He paused when he saw that the Spartan had long dark brown hair. He placed his foot under it then rolled it onto its back. He and his squad froze and stared in shock.

"Epitaph, you're a female?"

It looks like Epitaph's secret is out! The question is 'what will happen now?' Find out Next!

4. A Clever Little Rouse

**HELLOOO! Sorry for the disappearance! Thanks for being so patient. I reward you with another chapter! I'm actually quiet surprised how many people like this story. I didn't think it'd really take off like

it has lol. Anyway enjoy and look for my new story "Halo Sacrifice for Salvation" Coming soon! **

Oh I will also be deleting some of my older stories such as "Andraste Fate". Sorry to those who were fans but I hit a brick wall with that one so I'm scrapping it. Laterz!

Chapter 3

A clever little Rouse

"Hmmâ€¦ This is an interesting turn of events." Ehru spoke as they all stared down at the Spartan. Her face was calm and her expression gentle; it looked as if she were merely asleep. You wouldn't have ever guessed that Able had just kicked her into a boulder hard enough to knock her out and send her helmet flying off.

Now the group of Sangheili were standing around her, wondering what to do next.

"Are you going to kill her, Sir?" Kaine asked as he looked at their leader.

The Ultra just stared down, at the Spartan, his activated swords still in his hands. "â€¦Iâ€¦I can'tâ€¦"

Drak knelt down and carefully picked up the human female. "â€¦Sir, I think we should keep her."

The group looked at him quickly; did he just suggest what they think he did?

"Keep her, have you gone mad, Drak?! If someone were to find out we were harboring a Spartan on our ship the entire Covenant would be after us!" Orro told him. "And if she awoke on a ship that appeared Covenant she'd rip through all our men to try and escape!"

"I think it's a good idea; studying a Spartan up close would be very beneficial to our research on humans. I also don't believe this Spartan would really hurt anyone as long as they didn't appear that threatening. She did spare Kaine by shooting his weapon instead of him. She can't be that bad." Ehru stated.

"Yeah, that's right!" Kaine said before looking at his Commander once more. "What do you think, Sir?"

Able looked around at his squad before his yellow eyes rested on the unconscious Epitaph. "Weâ€¦are supposed to present the Spartan to the Shipmaster dead. If we do not he will know something is wrong and come after us. Our single Super Carrier cannot stand against a whole fleet." Orro told them.

They all looked down and thought deeply. They didn't want to kill Epitaph; it was against their ethics and honor to cause harm to a female no matter the species.

"â€¦Ehru, can you remove her armor from her body suit?" Able suddenly asked.

"What?! Why?!"

"Can you do it?" He asked with a firm tone in his voice.

Ehru paused and walked over to Drak. He examined the armor carefully. "Yeah, it will be a task but I can do it; what do you have in mind?"

The black armored Ultra stood up and began to search the surrounding area. "A little rouse to aid our goal and fool that Shipmaster."

****Onboard the Covenant Super Carrier "The Righteous Passage"****

****2 hours laterâ€¦****

The Shipmaster paced in front of his seat at the bridge. He had been waiting for a transmission from Able to confirm the success of his mission all day and was growing very impatient.

("Did the Demon defeat him and his squad? I suppose that would not be too much of a surprise.")

Just as he was about to give the order to send troops down to the surface to investigate, a Sangheili spoke up from his seat at the controls. "Shipmaster, incoming message from the Surface. It is Able 'Idhe-."

"Put him through!" The Shipmaster ordered; startling the minor. He quickly did as he was told and Able's face soon appeared on the main screen. "The mission was a success, I presume?"

"Yes, Shipmaster; I have eliminated the demon." He replied before lifting up a dead Spartan into view.

The Shipmaster studied the human carefully; it was a male with short messy black hair and green dead eyes. He looked about 36 in human years and his head was nearly cut off. It hung loosely by some skin and muscle.

Able waited quietly; praying that the Shipmaster would believe that this was the Spartan. It was difficult finding a good match to Epitaph since she was a Spartan II and they were very rare, probably even extinct by now. Epitaph could be the very last of her kind.

He had to settle for the biggest Spartan III he could find and hope the Shipmaster wouldn't notice how awkwardly the armor sat on his body.

"Ah, a fine kill! You have done a great favor for the Journey by eliminating such an imposing demonic heretic!" The Shipmaster smiled. "To take down such a beast that has taken so many lives before you is the showings of a true warrior. The Forerunners smile upon you!"

"I will be returning to my ship. We have gathered much information and now it must be analyzed. You can send our pay as you always have." Able told him as he dropped the fake Epitaph.

"Ah, of course; I hope to hear from you again."

Able merely nodded and the transmission ended.

The Ultra let out a loud sigh of relief and looked at Ehru. "Get that armor off of him and have Orro call us a Phantom."

Ehru nodded and went to work removing the armor from the dead Spartan. It was much easier since the armor didn't fit him in the first place.

Able walked over to the abandoned building and entered. He went up to the floor Epitaph lived on and saw Kaine standing guard. Lying on a couple mattresses and blankets behind him was Epitaph; still out cold and showing no signs of waking up anytime soon.

"Sir, did it work? Is she safe?" The young Minor asked.

"For now at leastâ€¦has there been any changes?" He asked as he walked over and knelt beside her.

Kaine shook his head and sighed. "No, Sir, she hasn't moved or made a sound. I'm beginning to wonder if she really isn't injured."

Able brushed some of her brown hair out of her face and gazed at her. "Amazing, is it not; a lone female held off wave after wave of enemy forces, knowing very well that even if they stopped coming she would not survive on what limited supplies she possessed." He spoke as he glanced at the few boxes of rations Epitaph had under a tarp. They would have probably only lasted her about another month."

"Yes, Sir." Kaine agreed while watching his Commander.

Orro walked into the room and the two Sangheili looked at him as he saluted. "Ehru has taken the Spartan's armor and placed it inside our Phantom. It is time to depart, Sir."

Able nodded and noticed Kaine going to pick up Epitaph. "I will take her, Kaine. If she were to wake up on the way to our ship I would rather be the one to restrain her."

The minor looked at his Commander and nodded before picking up his carbine and backing away a little. Able carefully slid his left arm under Epitaph's head and his right arm under her knees. He lifted her off the mattresses and turned to walk to the stairwell.

"â€¦Bewareâ€¦the Floodâ€¦"

The three Sangheili froze and looked at her quickly, expecting her to wake up. Able could feel that Epitaph's muscles had tensed up but she was still out cold. "Epitaph?"

"â€¦It will escapeâ€¦consumeâ€¦learnâ€¦Bewareâ€¦the Floodâ€¦!." She muttered.

Able, Kaine, and Orro couldn't make sense of what she was talking about. Able shook her a little in his arms to see if he could stir her. "Epitaph, what is this 'Flood' you speak of?"

She didn't respond but her body relaxed and she became quiet once more. The Sangheili exchanged confused glances at each other.

"Uh, Sirâ€¦what was that all about? Was she warning us of something?" The minor asked.

"I am not sure what she meant, Kaine." Able responded as he looked down at her a little worriedly.

"The only way we will find out is by questioning her when she wakes. We should go." Orro added.

Able nodded and lead them out of the building. He saw Ehru and Drak by the Phantom and his gaze moved from them down to Epitaph's face.

("I am not certain of this but I have a bad feelingâ€¦") He thought to himself. ("Whatever this 'Flood' is, it is going to be a severe problem in the futureâ€¦")

5. From Premonition to Nightmare

Chapter 4

From Premonition to Nightmare

Darkness was all she could see; an empty darkness that made her extremely uncomfortable. The last thing Epitaph could remember was being kicked by the black Ultra called Able.

"â€¦Am Iâ€¦dead?"

Suddenly a bright flash of light blinded her. She shut her eyes tightly and shielded her face with her arms. After a few moments the light dissipated and she opened her eyes to a scene she had never witnessed before. It was a city; a bustling Forerunner city with crafts of all shapes and sizes going around and children playing happily.

"W-What is thisâ€¦? Another vision?"

She walked forward slowly, not being noticed by the tall human-like figures walking about her in the streets. Epitaph was completely lost and confused. The sky suddenly became dark and all the citizens looked up at the sky; Epitaph copied the movement.

Things that looked like falling debris crashed around the city and strange organisms that looked like nasty bulbs of flesh scuttled out of them. The citizens ran screaming as the bulbs attacked them. Soon complete chaos erupted; Forerunners ran in a panic, fire billowed from the buildings, and smoke blocked out the suns.

Epitaph pulled out her pistol and started shooting the bulbs. The Forerunners who were attacked suddenly began moving and she gasped as the transformed into monsters with strange tentacles and distorted faces. She backed up as men, women, and children infected by the bulbs stalked closer to her.

**"â€¦Do not be afraidâ€¦I am peaceâ€¦I am salvationâ€¦"*

She shuddered as they all spoke in unison with the same voice. "What the hell are you?!"

Another flash enveloped the scene and Epitaph found herself floating in space. She looked around and saw a massive ring-like structure floating next to a gas giant. "W-What is that thing; some kind of mega Space Station?"

"We had no choice; the Flood had become too powerfulâ€¦ It had spread too farâ€¦" _A female voice spoke.

Epitaph looked around quickly but saw nobody around her. "Who's there; show yourself!"

"Halo will destroy all sentient life; it will starve them to death... We will gladly give up our existence in order to preserve lifeâ€¦ The only remnant we shall leave is our technology and our knowledgeâ€¦ I myself left behind my most precious treasureâ€¦ Youâ€¦" _

Suddenly, an orb of light formed in the center of the ring. With each minute it grew in size.

"My creationâ€¦ my childâ€¦ we leave everything to you now... Beware of the Flood." _

The orb blew outwards, forming a horizontal ring like an Angel's glowing halo with a loud noise. Epitaph was struck by the halo as it blew by and she screamed as intense pain ripped through her body. Images flashed before her. The Prophet of Truth, Lord Hood, an Elite in strange gold armor, Dr. Halsey; so many images rushed into her mind so quickly that she couldn't withstand it.

"Stop it!" She yelled as she gripped her head and shut her eyes tightly but the images continued their attack on her sanity.

A Brute Chieftain, a female A.I., a Spartan in green armor, the Ring, those strange bulbs of flesh; she was mercilessly bombarded by them and voices.

"STOP IT!"

Epitaph sat up quickly letting out a small scream. She whirled her head around in a panic, her mind and body tense and out of sync. The images and voices finally stopped and she wiped her forehead; her body was drenched in sweat. Epitaph pulled her legs up against her chest and hugged them tightly before burying her face in her knees as she continued to breathe heavily.

("What was-Where didâ€¦ good God I have such a migraineâ€¦ but at least I'm aliveâ€¦")

The female Spartan paused suddenly. "I'mâ€¦ alive?"

Epitaph looked up and tensed up quickly. She was not only alive, but she was alive inside a Covenant ship. From what she could tell she was sitting in their version of a Medical Bay.

Just then, Epitaph heard something moving. She looked to her right quickly and there hiding in the corner were five Grunts and three strange creatures she had never seen before. They looked like floating purplish jellyfish with eel-like heads. They stared at her

nervously and squeaked when she threw the covers off and stood up.

Epitaph's bodysuit was pulled off down to her hips and its sleeves had been tied together, leaving the upper half of her body completely uncovered and bare. There was strange slime over her bruised side that had hit the boulder and she growled. "Gross."

She then wiped it off and put the suit back on before turning her attention to the group of aliens cowering in the corner. "Where is my armor?"

The Grunts squeaked when she spoke and huddled together more tightly. "PLEASE DON'T KILL US!" They cried.

Epitaph growled, making them shut up quickly. She had always hated dealing with Grunts. They behaved like children and when they were pleading for their lives it made her feel like a monster.

"Look, I'm not gonna hurt you okay? I just want my armor." She told them as she approached and knelt down. "See; it's alright."

They slowly began to come towards her when Epitaph sensed another presence. With one fluid motion, she spun around and did a hard leg sweep. She felt her strike make contact with something, knocking it back off its feet. The other aliens quickly cowered back into the corner as the one who tried to sneak up on Epitaph lost his active cammo; it was the minor Kaine 'Eto.

Epitaph leapt over him and ran out of the room with great speed. She heard the young Sangheili yell to her but she paid no attention. She bobbed and weaved through the ship, avoiding the ships occupants when she could and knocking out others when there was no way around.

"Okay, if I were a hinge-head where would I put Spartan armor?" _She thought as she peeked around a corner. Seeing nobody around, Epitaph quickly darted to the next corner and repeated the process.

The Spartan must have been moving about the ship for almost an hour before she stumbled onto the armory. _"This seems rightâ€¦|"_

She quietly entered the large room and crept quietly through the darkness. _"Thank god these guys don't know what proper lighting is."_ She thought as she peeked around a corner.

Standing there were two Sangheili with the top half of their armor off. She recognized them as two from Able's team. She slipped closer and listened in on their conversation, hoping to get a clue to where her armor was.

Ehru sighed and glanced at his younger sibling. "What are you so concerned about; she will not cause any problems." He told Orro as he cleaned his chest plate sitting on his lap.

"Ehru we have seen what she can do. Even if she is without her armor and weapons she is still a great threat. I just think it would be a good idea to have someone with her at all times so she can be under surveillance." Orro replied as he removed a Fuel Rod Cannon from its rack and began cleaning it.

"You are worried that she will try to attack Able for knocking her out." Ehru chuckled and looked at him with his light green eyes. "I am sure Epitaph is not as bad as she appears and I highly doubt she is the type who will attempt to take vengeance for such a trivial matter. She did hold her own even though she was suffering from severe exhaustion. Spartans are such mysterious creatures."

The younger Sangheili sighed and sat down across from him. "Makes you wonder how they come to be and what their limits are, does it not?"

Ehru merely smirked and placed his chest plate beside him before he started cleaning his gauntlets. "Give her a chance, little brother; you may see what lies beneath that battle hardened exterior and make a new friend."

"We all can only hope so, brother."

Epitaph listened carefully to every word as she watched the brothers. She didn't know what to make of it.

_ "Me; befriend a bunch of split-lips and their merry followers?! Not in their WILDEST dreams would I do such an idiotic thing!" _She thought with a quiet sneer, unaware of the glowing red eyes in the darkness behind her.

****CLIFFHANGER ADDICT!****

****Sorry for such a long wait! This was almost finished for a while but my microsoft word has been buggy as has my laptop. Hopefully the next chapter will come much sooner.****

End
file.